St. Joseph Lake Is a Tranquil Respite and Valuable Asset

The story of how St. Joseph Lake became a reality on the Motherhouse campus is an interesting one. Two sources provide some specifics.

The Motherhouse Chronicles for April 6, 1932 describe the striking of the spring that would form the lake. The well-diggers struck a stream of water near the power house that Wednesday at 1 p.m. It was reported that it was producing a flow of 170 gallons per minute.

The story credits St. Joseph for this good fortune as the sisters had been praying to him and Wednesday is “his day.”

St. Mary College and Academy, the booklet published in 1932 on the occasion of the dedication of the new buildings, describes the lake as being formed by well waters and explains how it developed.

From the day it was struck, the well has pumped steadily 50 gallons a minute. It supplies not only the lake, holding 1,400,000 gallons, but the laundry, the sprinkling systems and the refrigeration system as well. If it continues as it has begun… it will be the most valuable single donation the community has ever received.

Today, the lake remains a valued and beautiful place on campus.

Sister Mary Brought Campus Favorite to Marygrove

Sister Mary McGrath, for many years a professor of psychology and chair of the Psychology department at Marygrove College, began a pre-school program in 1942 at the college as a service to the Detroit community and as a lab for her psychology students. At one point, she thought it would be good to have a dog for the children. Some also claimed the dog added to the security of the campus.

An animal lover, Mary believed preschool children would learn animal care and sharing of love as part of the pre-school experience if they had a “resident dog.” She chose a gentle, black Labrador retriever and named him Tobie. His name was influenced by the devotion she and her colleague and friend Sister Mary Jerome Sanford had to the angel Raphael. The Book of Tobit in the Old Testament tells of Tobias going on a journey with Raphael and a dog. (continued on p. 2)
(continued from p. 1)

A Marygrove publication of the 1970s carried the headline:

“Top Security Dog Impounded
Moral: Be Careful of the
Company You Keep

“Tobie, Marygrove’s 10-year-old
Labrador mascot and defender, is
back in action after spending the
weekend of January 16-19 in the
dog pound at 24th and Jefferson.
Sister Marie Hopkins (Raynora),
who has charge of the dog, paid
his $5.00 bail that Monday morn-
ing. 'He was in good condition
except that he stank,' she said.

“Security Chief Leroy Gipperich
said that Friday he called the dog
catcher when he saw a potentially
dangerous pack of dogs roaming
the campus. By the time the dog
catcher arrived, he said, the
dogs—Tobie among them—had
left the campus and were wag-
ging down Marygrove Drive.

“The dog shelter notified
Marygrove Monday that after
Tobie had been impounded,
‘Tobie—Marygrove College’ was
noticed on his tags.”

A second story involves Miss
Anna McNamara, a Marygrove
employee for many years who
was the receptionist at the en-
trance to the Liberal Arts Build-
ing where most classes met. Dur-
ing the 10 minutes between clas-
ses, one of Miss Mac’s duties was
to make announcements and
page individuals over the public
address system that was audible
throughout the building. The
process was fairly simple. If any-
one wanted someone paged, she
just went to Miss Mac and asked
her to page the person. And,
without question, she did just
that. One afternoon a student
looking for some fun made her
request and Miss Mac obliged.

The last story shows how com-
fortable Tobie and the
Marygrove community were with
each other. Tobie was well-
known and loved around the
campus. And, it almost seemed
as if he could get anything he
wanted from a large number of
people on the campus. An inter-
esting sight was to see him wait-
ing with a group of people for
the elevator on the main floor of
Liberal Arts, getting on with eve-
ryone else, getting off on second
floor, and heading for the Eng-
lish faculty offices. Once there,
he enjoyed many treats, which
his friends, especially Sister Bar-
bara Johns, had brought him. But
Tobie didn’t always take the ele-
vator; it wasn’t unusual to meet
him either taking the stairs or
resting on a step.

The truth is Tobie was part of
Marygrove.

Ann McNamara was the re-
ceptionist in the general office
of the Liberal Arts Building at
Marygrove College from 1933
to 1970. Students there knew
her as Miss Mac and Anna
McNamara. In her declining
years, Sister Honora, who had
been president of the college
for many years, assured her
that she would always have a
home at Marygrove and finan-
cial support as long as she
lived. Miss Mac had no close
relatives. After Honora’s
death in 1974, the IHMs
thought it would be best to
bring Ann to the infirmary in
Monroe.

Earlier, Honora had helped
Miss Mac make all of her
funeral arrangements. So, after
her death Jan. 8, 1977, her
wake was held at the Ted
Sullivan Funeral Home on W.
McNichols and her funeral
Mass took place at Gesu
Church. Because of inclement
weather, only a few Sisters
from the Motherhouse were
able to attend the funeral.

General Office with its 1928 tech-
nology: switchboard with seven
trunk lines and latest telephone